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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	AF-00	AID-00	USNW-00	A-00	ACQ-00	CCO-00
	CG-00	COME-00	CTME-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	EB-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	INSE-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-00	NEA-00
	NRC-00	NSAE-00	OCS-00	OMB-00	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00
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INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D), B5

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 006726

STATE FOR EUR A/S FRIED, S/WCI AMB. PROSPER, LEGAL ADVISER
BELLINGER, EUR/UBI, EUR/PPD, R, AND NEA/PPD - FERNANDEZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/08/2015

TAGS: KISL, PREL, KPAO, PGOV, MARR, MOPS, PTER, UK

SUBJECT: SPEAKING OUT ON GITMO AND DETAINEES: "BETTER TO
EXPLAIN THE FUTURE THAN JUSTIFY THE PAST"

REF: A. STATE 139288

B. STATE 142348

C. STATE 146163

Classified By: DCM David T. Johnson. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: Drawing on guidance in refs A-B, post continues working to secure a better understanding in the UK and elsewhere of the military necessity and security rationale for U.S. detainees operations including at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO). We have had extensive exchanges on these issues with HMG officials, UK opinion leaders, and British and international media (paras 3-8). We have made some progress in getting British and other audiences to understand the need and rationale for detainee operations, regularly incorporating USG points into our ongoing public diplomacy efforts within the UK and, through the Media Outreach Center (MOC), the Pan-Arab media.

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End

Summary.

Public Diplomacy Engagement

3. (SBU) Since the release of the last four UK citizens from GTMO in January 2005, British media have focused far more on detainee policy than on GTMO-specific cases. In editorials, GTMO is almost always mentioned in the same sentence as Abu Ghraib and Iraq. In the most critical journals, particularly "The Guardian," "The Independent," and "The Daily Mail," the three issues are consistently intertwined. Since July 7, many critics have linked the terror attacks in London to those three issues, with one op-ed critic asserting in the July 20 "Guardian" that British Muslims would have been more helpful in helping authorities monitor extremism "had it not been for Fallujah, Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay."

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5. (SBU) Even without more targeted guidance, we respond proactively whenever we see stories with spurious charges of abuse from former GTMO detainees or lawyers representing current detainees. The DCM has given numerous print, radio, and television interviews on the GTMO issue in general and spurious abuse allegations in particular. The Media Outreach Center (MOC), which is responsible for outreach to London's Pan-Arab media, has addressed the issue with Arab print media. In addition, the MOC's Director has appeared on Al-Jazeera on multiple occasions to explain USG policies

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concerning GTMO and Quran desecration. A survey done by our Information Resource Center shows that British journalists have had significant access to GTMO. At least nine prominent correspondents from major British publications and the BBC have visited Guantanamo since 2003. These journalists as well as HMG press officials have confirmed that the more specific the USG points on the continuing threat from detainees, the more objective the resulting story.

6. (SBU) When occasional stories surface on the status of third-country nationals detained at GTMO who also hold UK "residency," both we and HMG officials reiterate that international law only grants consular responsibility for such detainees to their country of citizenship. The Public Affairs Section uses a letter based on the most relevant USG points (refs A-B) as a template to respond to the numerous GTMO-related letters that we receive, many of which are prompted by Amnesty International or other NGO campaigns.

POL is also drawing on the USG points to respond to inquiries from Members of Parliament and organizations such as the United Nations Association of Wales.

7. (C) We also continue to engage proactively with local American, British and other experts on international law. We have taken advantage of the presence of visiting USG officials, such as the April 18 visit of Legal Adviser Bellinger, to provide more direct messages and answers to British officials and opinion leaders.

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8. (U) In that regard, we look forward to taking advantage of the Department's reenergized commitment to translation of USG points (ref C) to prepare the latest version of USG detainee points (ref B) in Arabic for dissemination to Mideast journalists attending an August 24 MOC-hosted media roundtable with CENTCOM MG Lute.

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